

BROWNS vs. STEELERS



MIKE JOHNSON 59

LB 6-1 230
VIRGINIA TECH
DOB: 11-26-62
SOUTHPORT, N.C.
1B, SUPP. DRAFT, 84
7th YEAR

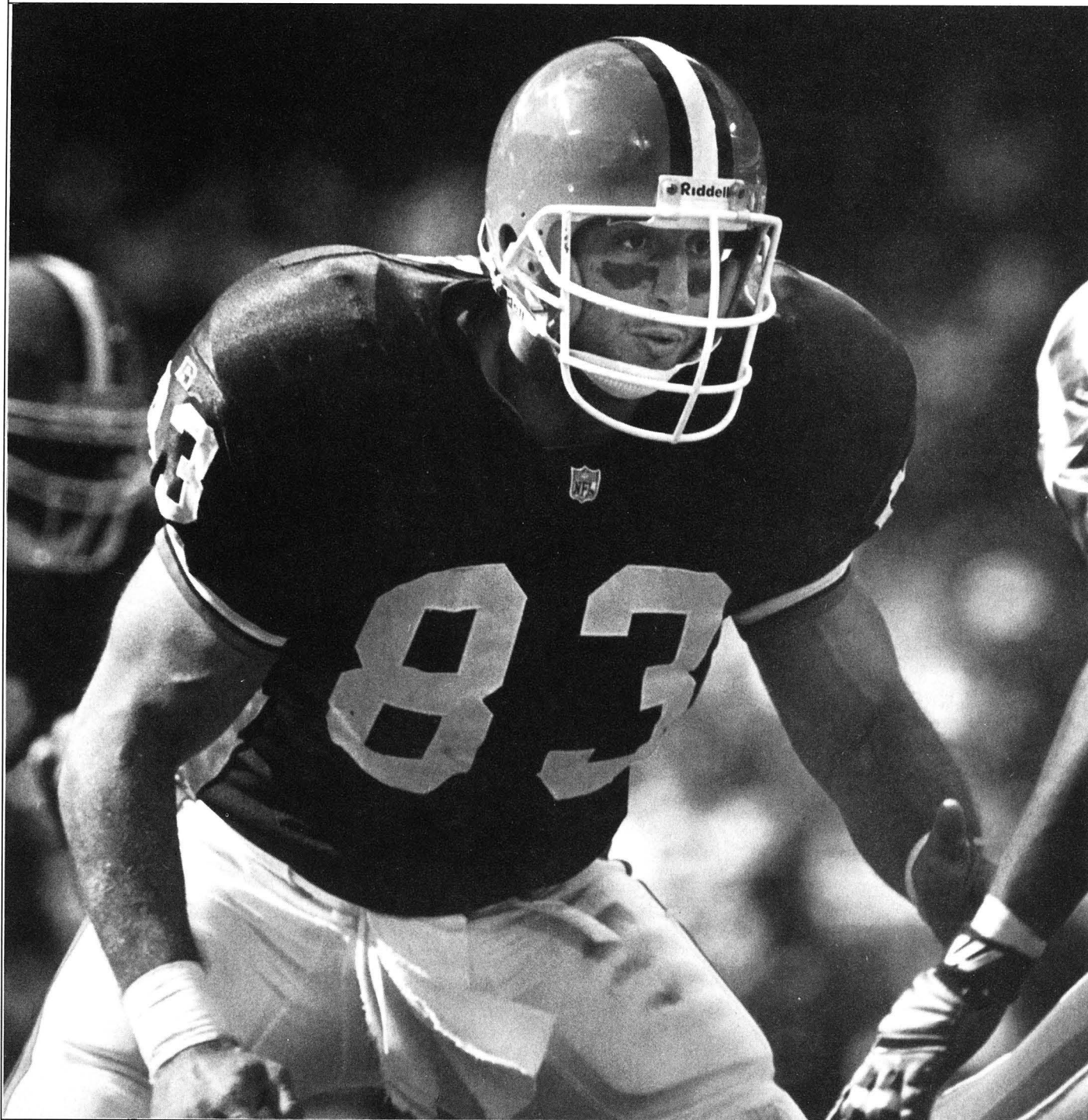


Photo by Gregory Dredzon

Mark Bavaro 83 — Tight End



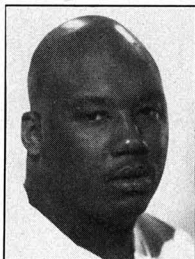
6'-4", 245 lbs., 8th Year
 Notre Dame
 Danvers (Mass.) H.S.
 Born: April 28, 1963
 East Boston, Mass.
 Free Agent, 1992

PRO: Two-time Pro Bowl starter and All-NFL honors recipient, who underwent major knee surgery in 1990, but managed to maintain his high level of play . . . Did not play in 1991 after subsequent knee surgery . . . Career totals include 266 catches for 3,722 yards and 28 touchdowns . . . Played on the Super Bowl XXV team and led all Giants' receivers in playoff stats with 13 catches for 129 yards . . . Known as a powerhouse blocker . . . Started his rookie year and voted unanimous All-NFL Rookie . . . Originally drafted by the New York Giants in 1985 (fourth round).



Photo by Gregory Dredson

Bill Johnson 94 — Defensive Lineman



6'-4", 302 lbs.
Michigan State
Simeon (Chicago, Ill.) H.S.
Born: December 9, 1968
Chicago, Ill.
Draft 3a (65th overall)

PRO: Has 9 tackles, 8 solo, including a sack, thus far . . . Projected as one of the top 15 choices of the '92 NFL draft prior to his injury (knee sprain), Johnson lasted until the third round . . . On his mishap: "For the record I did not get pushed down a flight of stairs . . . it was in the privacy of my home . . . I was going downstairs to answer the telephone and my foot caught on the first step and I fell . . . I'm just concentrating on getting my knee better so I can play football as soon as possible." . . . Participated in pass rush drills last mini-camp.

Games played/started in '92: 4/2.

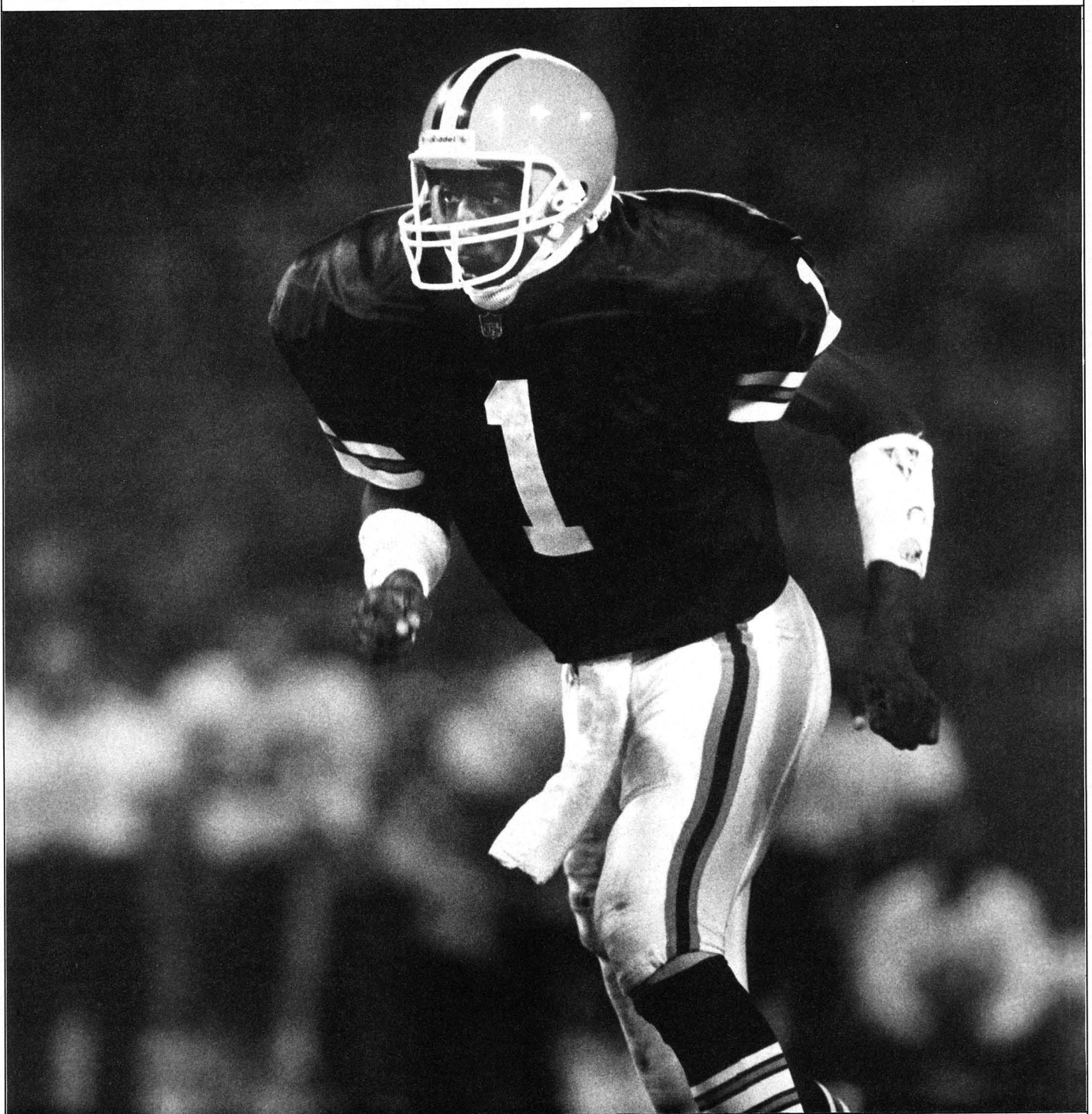
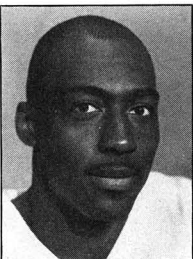


Photo by Gregory Dredzon

Michael Jackson 1 — Wide Receiver



6'-4", 195 lbs., 2nd Year
Southern Mississippi
Kentwood (La.) H.S.
Born: April 12, 1969
Tangipahoa, La.
Draft 6, 1991 (141st overall)

PRO: Exciting receiver with deep-threat speed who led the Browns with a 15.8 yard reception average in rookie campaign . . . Browns selected Jackson with their 6th round pick, 141st overall in the 1991 draft . . . Fourth Browns' selection ever from Southern Mississippi . . . When asked about his name, Michael will tell you: "I can't sing at all. I'll leave all the singing and dancing to the other guy." . . . Observers have overheard some teammates calling him "Thriller."

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Clay Matthews, The Ironman

By Frank Derry

Clayman celebrates his 15th season

He has now played in more games than any linebacker in Browns' history. He's been to the Pro Bowl four times. And he's been an All-League selection on three occasions.

But what is probably most impressive about Clay Matthews is not his long list of past accomplishments. Rather, it's the fact that after dishing out and receiving punishing blows for 205 NFL regular-season games (he hit the 200 mark in Week 16 last season), Clay Matthews remains one of the most solid and dependable outside linebackers in the league.

"Most people who understand football know I'm still going to line up and win most of the plays I'm in on," said Matthews matter-of-factly. "There's always a couple of plays a game you'd love to have back and do over. But I'll win most of the plays."

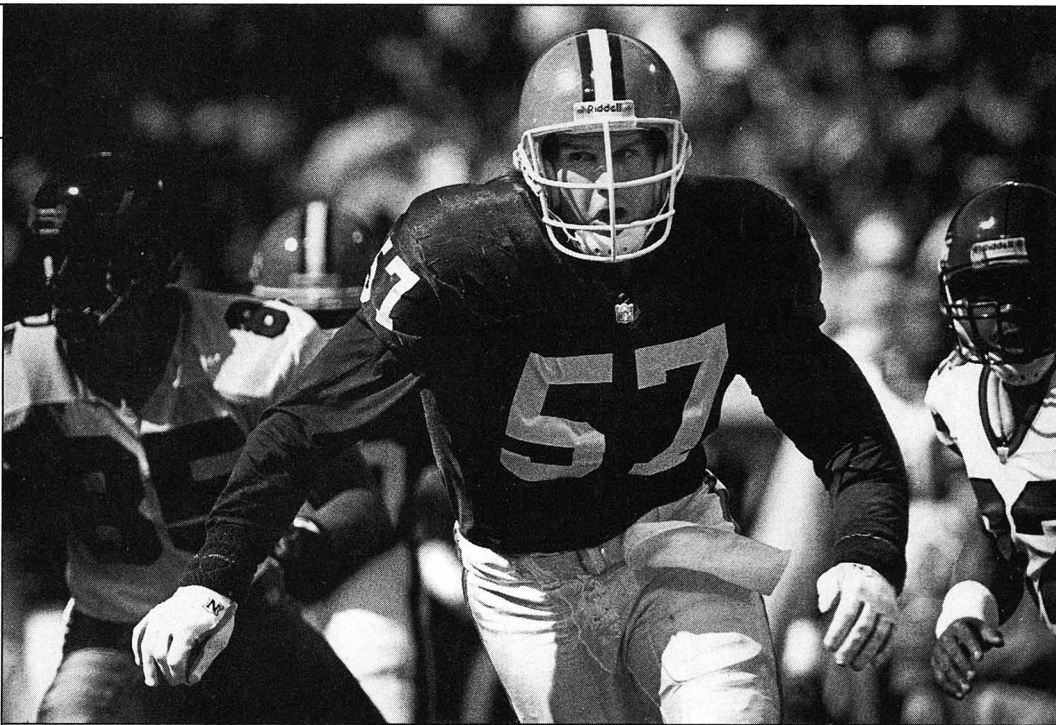
There are three big reasons why Matthews remains a very productive outside linebacker.

- No. 1, he keeps himself in outstanding physical condition.
- No. 2, he's an excellent student of the game.
- No. 3, he always gives 100 percent on every play.

"I don't want to sound like I'm blowing my own horn, but I've always tried to have good techniques; I've always tried to play with a lot of effort. I think my success has been a result of a mixture of all three."

Matthews gives a great deal of the credit for his success to the three men who were starting at linebacker when he first arrived in 1978 as a first-round draft choice out of the University of Southern California.

There was outside linebacker Gerald Irons, who taught Matthews the need to be 100 percent physically prepared.



■ Clay Matthews

"Gerald Irons was a very skilled athlete who not only was very talented, but he also was a superbly conditioned athlete," Matthews recalled.

On the other side was Charlie Hall. "Charlie was really a marginal athlete as far as his weight, speed and strength. But he had excellent techniques, he was very smart and, therefore, was a very productive player."

The third member of the starting trio was middle linebacker Dick Ambrose. "Dick Ambrose was my roommate and he was really one of my favorite players because, here again, was a guy who, if you looked strictly at his physical numbers, the computer would have spit him out as a reject.

"But he was very smart and he worked real hard at the game. Basically, above all, he played with a lot of tenacity. He could be blocked, but he refused to be blocked by the sheer presence of his will."

Matthews took the best of all three approaches and molded them into his

own single game plan.

The results have been impressive, to say the least.

He landed Pro Bowl spots in 1986, 1988, 1989 and 1990, and was an All-League selection in 1984, 1988 and 1989.

Heading into the 1992 season, he had 1,236 career tackles, 62 quarterback sacks, 19 forced-fumbles, 14 fumble recoveries, 12 interceptions and four blocked field goals.

The key for Matthews is the fact he still very much enjoys the game, although there are times he admits to feeling his age (36).

"Some days I come home and swear I will not be able to finish the season," Matthews said. "But then the next day, I feel like I could go another two years."

At one point a few years back, Matthews thought he might enjoy finishing up his career with a Southern California team (he makes his off-season home in Los Angeles), but now he thinks it would be an honor to play his

entire career with one team.

"I really enjoy playing here," said Matthews, who along with his wife Leslie, has five children — Jennifer (11), Kyle (10), Brian Clay (7), William Clay III (6) and Casey Christopher (3).

Matthews and his family live in Strongsville, Ohio. Looking ahead, Clay recently opened a car dealership in the Cleveland area.

Hall of Famer Lou Groza leads the Browns with 17 years and 216 games played, although Matthews is gaining.

And just how much longer does he plan to play?

"At least another 10 years, wouldn't you think?" Matthews said with an impish smile.

Realistically speaking, Clay Matthews should be good for another year or two. And if that's the case, he'll gently kick Lou 'The Toe' right off the No. 1 rung. ■

Q & A With... Randy Baldwin

By Bruce Speight, Jr.

Q: Coming into training camp, you probably received the least amount of attention in the crowded backfield with Mack, Vardell, Metcalf, Hoard etc., and were the only one in camp at one point, what was your attitude and approach at that time?

A: My attitude was to establish some relationship with the coaches in the offense and try to get comfortable with the game plan so I know what's going on so when it's time to play, I can go out and play without holding back. So those were my intentions—just to work hard. Coming off my second year in the league, I know it's harder for a lot of people to come in and try to make that impact. I just wanted to settle myself in so if things came up, I could be ready to play if called upon. I think things worked out good for me when I was here alone. It worked out in my favor because I'm still here.

Is this your first real experience on special teams and what type of an adjustment has it called for on your part?

I haven't played special teams since I left high school. It really hasn't been an adjustment at all. The way I'm really looking at it is it's a contribution to the team on behalf of my teammates. It's all fun, like I said I really haven't done it since high school but those are the things you don't forget—your fun times and things that you used to do and used to like—so one of the things I used to like is running back kicks in high school on the kickoff team. Those are a few of the things I felt comfortable with but I had to learn it on another level in the NFL. I just used my talent and worked hard and things have kind of worked out for me. It was really rough in the beginning. It's still rough because I'm still learning. It's just a situation that hopefully everything will pay off with hard work.

What is so rough about it?

You've got bigger and faster guys. It's not a situation where you're in college or high school where a guy has been there only 2 or 3 years. But in the NFL, you have guys that have been there 10, 11 or 8 and 9 years that make a living doing that so you just can't come in and pull the wool over somebody's eyes. That's the hardest thing about it. Guys are disciplined and they know what they have to do. They use their wisdom and not so much their talent.

Very few people are able to come out of college and play in the league so I feel like I have to do what I can to stay in here whether it be playing offense or special team so you can't help but to pin it back when guys are out there revving to go. I think the biggest thing that helped us was the Minnesota game. I've never seen so many guys in that situation that were willing to get better even though we were getting beat. Every time we touched the field on a kickoff return, we said 'let's take it to the house (score).' Even though they scored 56 points, we still said 'let's take it to the house.' That has to be a

feather in everybody's cap on special teams because you have to have guys that keep plugging and working hard. Then the only thing you can do is get better.

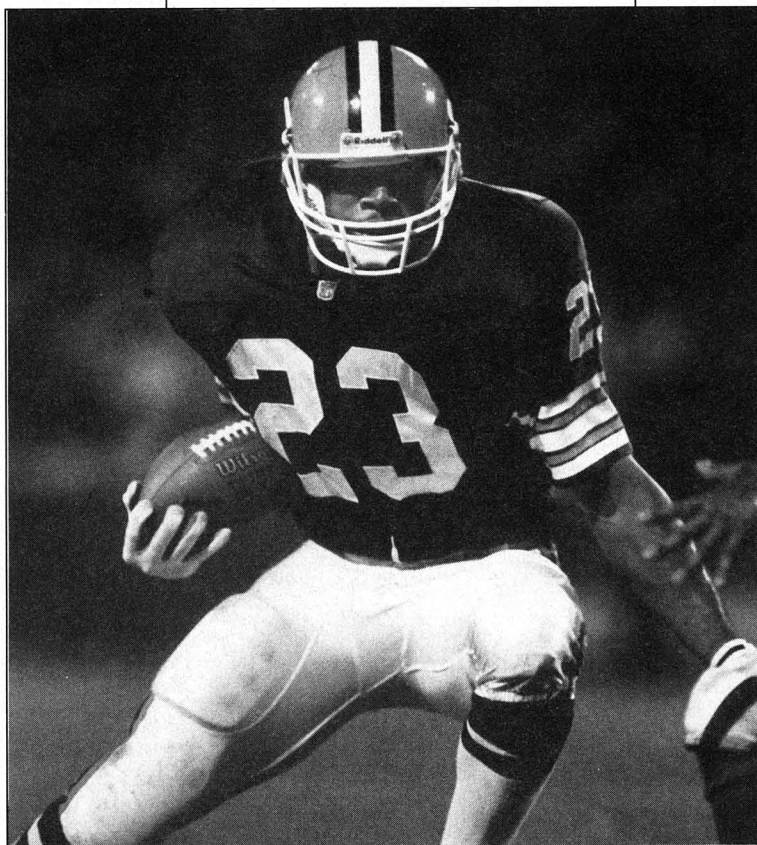
Your penchant for big play covering kicks as well as returning them—how do you explain that?

We all go out as a team and I try to use what the good lord gave me. You've got guys in the back about 280 or 290 pounds trying to block you so I try to outrun them. I try to put myself in the situation where I can make the tackle. I have Barry (Wilburn) on my left and Ron (Wolfley) on my right so I have a green light to go. Those guys have confidence in me and the other guys are behind me so that helps me out so I just go for it and things have been working out pretty well.

Can you recall what happened on the touchdown return at Tampa Bay?

The funny thing about that was to run a kickoff back and not look at the whole field and knowing guys are running and to take the first opening

you see and just run, I think that's the biggest thing about it. With the league the way it is and things moving so fast, you want to take the first opening and the thing that really helped me out was to be disciplined enough to look where the hole was supposed to be. I had the confidence in the guys, that's no doubt. It was just being disciplined enough to stay there and set guys up to take off. I think the thing that really sprung it open was when I saw the two guys coming downfield on the right side and they kind of took themselves out of the picture. I saw the blocks and I just went for it. ■



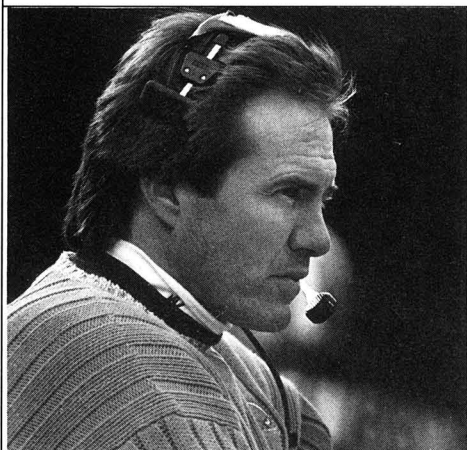
What has been the key, your approach as a kick returner?

I'm just having fun. I've pinned my ears back since preseason and I'm not going to even let them up. I'm just going to lay back and have fun. What happens is going to happen. I'm going in 110% because those guys rely on me like I rely on them.

What enables you to be so relaxed?

WELCOME TO CLEVELAND STADIUM . . . The Cleveland Browns extend a warm welcome to all fans attending today's game versus the Green Bay Packers at Cleveland Stadium.

THE SERIES: The Packers have a 7-5 lead in the regular season series and won, 23-12, in the only NFL title game meeting (at Green Bay) between the two teams in 1965. The Packers have won their last two outings with the Browns, 35-21 in 1983 and 17-14 in 1986 (the last meeting between the two teams at the Stadium). The Browns are 3-4 vs. the Packers at home and 2-3 away. Last Browns' win over the Pack occurred 10/19/80 at Cleveland Stadium. It was another of the Kardiak Kids' patented photo finishes with two touchdowns in the last 7:23, including a 46-yard scoring pass from Brian Sipe to Dave Logan with 16 seconds remaining, to give the Browns a 26-21 decision.



■ Bill Belichick

BILL SAYS: "I'm proud of the way our players have worked the last couple of weeks, especially during the bye. We've improved as a team and I think the effort and the results against Pittsburgh show that. What I think is evident is that, as a team, we've improved each week, but we have lots to work on. One of the things we need to get better at is playing with consistency in the first half . . . Defensively, we've been pretty good at the number one goal of every defense and that's keeping the other team from putting points on the board. What pleases the coaches is that whatever 11 players we have out there, they are all flying to the ball and that usually prevents big plays. You're going to lose some matchups, but we've got guys hustling to cover for each other. Certainly, the coaches can't question the effort and the toughness the defense has shown . . . The bye week was needed because of the injuries we've had at quar-

terback. The extra time gave Mike (Tomczak) the opportunity to learn more and become more comfortable with a lot of what we're trying to accomplish offensively. He's a real competitor and I like the way he takes charge. He gets better with each practice he has. We made some improvement throwing the ball — protection, running routes, accurate throws. It's coming, but we have a long way to go."

ON GREEN BAY: "It's like playing San Francisco with different uniform colors. Mike Holmgren is running the same offense he ran with the 49ers and he brought in Ray Rhodes as defensive coordinator and he's using the schemes they used in San Fran. Tony Bennett, who can play, is Charles Haley; and Sterling Sharpe, one of the best receivers in the league, is running routes Jerry Rice does . . . They've had two weeks to prepare for us and that helps them. It also means they were able to rest some of their injured and they're getting some players back, including a good back, Darrell Thompson. They beat Pittsburgh in their last game, so we know what they are capable of. It's good they're coming to our place. I think our young players are starting to respond to our crowds, who really get into the games at the Stadium."

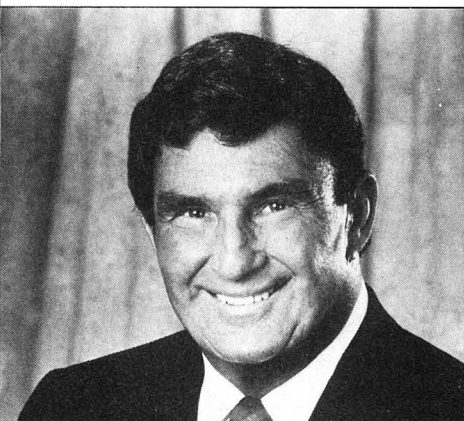
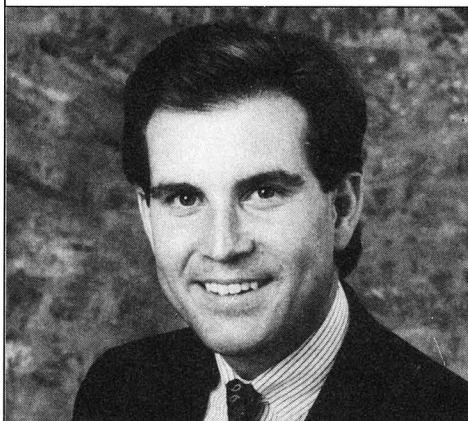
RADIO WAVES . . . Today's game can be heard on WHK-AM (1420) and WMMS-FM (100.7), flagship stations for the largest radio network (54 stations) in Browns' history. The Browns salute all the members of their radio network — in Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Kentucky. Eight-year veterans Nev Chandler (calls the action) and former Browns' offensive tackle Doug Dieken (adds color) are the Browns' radio team.

"T-ZAK" . . . Browns' quarterback Mike Tomczak began this season with the Packers, but was released



■ Mike Tomczak

when team rosters were reduced to 47 (8/31). After holding out most of training camp, Tomczak spent just eight days with the Packers. He was then signed by the Browns on Sept. 15, the day after Bernie Kosar fractured his ankle in a dramatic, last-second 27-23 loss to the Dolphins. Tomczak spent his first week watching Cleveland backup Todd Philcox prepare for the Raiders' contest. Philcox's stint as a starter was short as he fractured the thumb on his throwing hand in the victory over Los Angeles (although Todd, like Bernie, completed the game with the injury). "The terminology difference from the Packers to the Bears was more difficult. The Packers' even side was the Bears odd and things like that. Because of Lindy's (Infante) influence in both Cleveland and Green Bay, there are more similarities. But I still have to translate one language to another sometimes as I come to the line of the scrimmage," Tomczak explained . . . A year ago, Tomczak was signed by the Packers as a Plan B free agent and started seven games when Don Majkowski suffered a hamstring injury. As a Packer, Mike completed 128 of 238 passes (53.8%) for 1,490 yards with 11 TD passes and nine interceptions. He rushed 17 times for 93 yards and a TD.



■ Today's game with the Packers will be telecast by CBS. Jim Nantz (left) will handle the play-by-play and Hank Stram will offer color commentary.



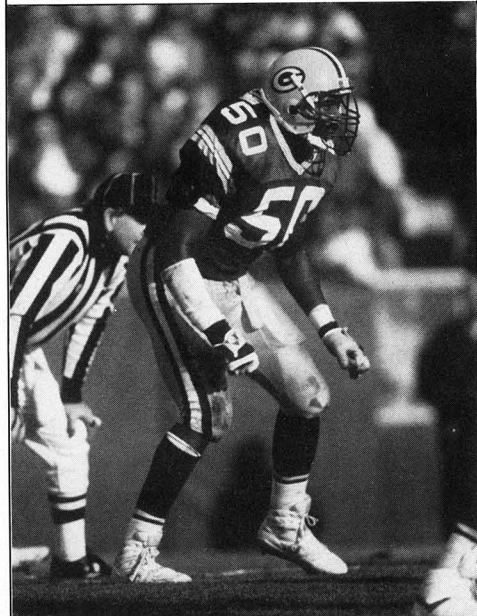
*Ed West (86) . . . Unquestionably one of the National Football League's best blocking tight ends, steady Ed West continues his climb among the Packers' receiving elite after beginning his career in 1984 as an unknown free agent . . . Ranks as Green Bay's 18th all-time leading receiver coming into the season with 142 catches for 1,661 yards (11.7 avg.) and 23 TDs . . . **1991:** Started all 16 games for the second straight year.*

Chuck Solomon/NFL Photos



Brian Noble (91) . . . One of the primary leaders on defense, personable Brian Noble has defined productivity since coming to Green Bay in 1985 . . . An undeniable force in the middle, he has led the Packers in total tackles in four of his seven seasons, including last year (also 1986-87 and 1989) . . . With 776 career tackles to his credit, Noble is averaging over 110 stops per season.

Vernon Biever/NFL Photos



Johnny Holland (50) . . . Both consistent and productive, Johnny Holland is one of the major reasons the Packers' linebacker corps is considered to be the strength of the football team . . . A starter since he arrived in Green Bay from the Texas A&M campus as a rookie in 1987, the highly mobile, six-year veteran has figured in 100-plus tackles each of the last four seasons, including a career-high 121 in 1989.

Vernon Biever/NFL Photos



Ron Hallstrom (65) . . . "Dependable" and "versatile" may be the best two adjectives to describe Ron Hallstrom and his 10-year career with the Green Bay Packers . . . Has played in every non-strike game since Nov. 21, 1982, when he made his professional "debut" vs. Minnesota - 149 games in all (147 regular season, two in the playoffs), which includes 108 starts.

Paul Spinelli/NFL Photos

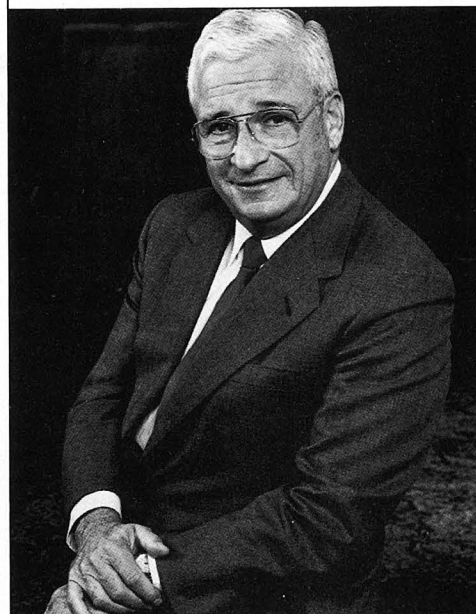


Photo by Gregory Drazdon

■ Arthur B. Modell

Art Modell recently had the opportunity to look back over his 31 years as owner of the Cleveland Browns and thought about some old friends.

Among those were Wellington Mara, George Halas, Pete Rozelle and Art's longtime friend - "the Chief" - the late Art Rooney of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Of course, there were many others.

But, on this day, when the NFL Alumni chose to honor Modell with the 1992 induction into the Order of the Leather Helmet, he recalled some of the old players. His first "hero" was a man who played without a helmet, Roy "Father" Lumpkin of the 1935 Brooklyn Dodgers.

"I have deep, deep regard and affection for old players," said Modell. "Players that made this game what it is today. Players who played for the love of the game."

When he addressed the audience, he said the night had been like a "mini highlight film." He ran into old friends like Sid Gillman, Fuzzy Thurston and Chuck Bednarik.

The Order of the Leather Helmet was named for Art Rooney, who was among the order's first class of laureates in 1978.

Membership in the order is reserved for those making deep and lasting contributions to the game of professional football.

Of course, it comes down to more than that. It comes down to caring about people - the players, coaches and fans.

And Modell, like Rooney, has made deep and lasting contributions to his community as well. ■

Jerry Simmons

Coach Simmons is on the sideline during Browns' games.

JERRY SIMMONS, Strength and Conditioning:

Born June 15, 1954, Elkhart, Kan., 2nd Year Browns, 14th Year Coaching, Fort Hays (Kan.) State.

Coaching Background:

1978 (Fort Hays State); 1980 (Clemson); 1981-82 (Rice); 1983-87 (University of Southern California); 1988-90 (New England Patriots); 1991-92 (Browns).

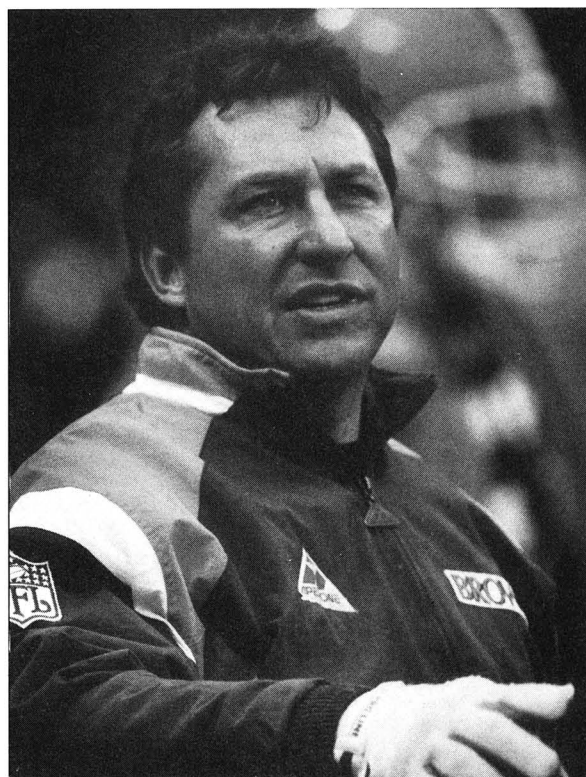


Photo by Gregory Drezdson

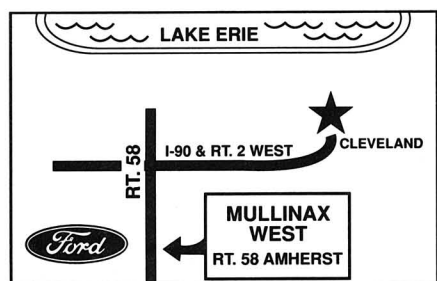
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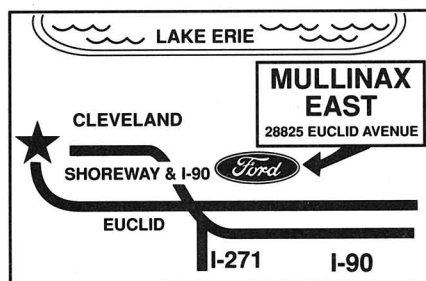
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